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B6

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

DATE: April 1, 1977

() Release (X) Excise () Deny

TIME: 16:30 - 17:00

Exemption(s): B6

PLACE: USIS Buenos Aires

Declassify: () In Part (X) In Full
() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to
Date Declassify on Reason

PARTICIPANTS: Ms. Patricia Derian, Human Rights and
Humanitarian Affairs Coordinator-
Designate, Department of State

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Mrs. Katharine Ray, Information Officer
Buenos Aires

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had expressed interest in meeting with
Ms. Derian and agreed to brief her on his own observations
of Argentina today. He asked not to be quoted on any of
his comments. Points made by him included:

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1. When Ms. Derian asked him what he thinks the outlook
for Argentina is, he replied that he doesn't know, although
he is troubled - and thinks the Argentines don't know either.

"This government is not terribly strong in its hold on power
and whether the absence of Videla would lead to something
worse in the government would be hard to tell."

2. "Elections now would be a horrible mess. Political
alternatives to the military government are not viable."
The Peronists are still strong as a group but "they have
never understood what democracy means." The Radical party,
made up of people who are, comparatively speaking, honest and
decent, has no real chance of getting into power. "They have
neither the backing nor the leadership."

3. The C J here keeps a "body count" of victims B6
resulting from the continued struggle between guerrillas
and security forces. Its unofficial total for 1976 was
1,380 bodies. That total, it believes, included 868 guerrillas
killed by security forces; 164 members of security forces killed
by guerrillas; 247 bullet-ridden bodies which could not be
identified; 35 executives believed to have been killed by leftist
terrorists; and 66 "miscellaneous" persons, who just happened
to be killed in confrontations, by bombs exploding, stray
bullets, etc.

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